

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 657

By McLeary

A RESOLUTION to recognize the Cherokee Wolf Clan as an official Native American Indian body in the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the original inhabitants of North and South America were peoples who became known to European immigrants as Indians, and therefore the original inhabitants of what is now the State of Tennessee were members of various tribes of American Indians; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's original peoples have strongly influenced the heritage of this great State and have left their mark by way of names of rivers, mountains, state names, and names of towns and counties; native peoples introduced local crops and medicinal herbs and left their influence in countless other ways; and

WHEREAS, the advance of European settlement, accompanied by the introduction of European diseases and the constant breaking of treaties by land-hungry settlers had a devastating effect upon the Native American Indian population; the crowning blow was the forced resettlement of Southeastern tribes in the Oklahoma territory by the Jackson administration over 150 years ago, known to the Cherokee as the "Trail of Tears"; and

WHEREAS, the spirit of the American Indians was not broken, surviving confinement on reservations, "Americanization" through suppression of language and culture, including removal of children to centralized "Indian" schools, and early bad practices by Indian agents and the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and

WHEREAS, today there is a great resurgence of pride of culture in all its forms, as characterized by the year round conducting of Powwows across the country and the nearing completion of the magnificent National Museum of the American Indian, a branch of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, over 15,000 American Indians are today residents of Tennessee; thousands of other Tennesseans proudly claim some Indian ancestry, but lack the precise genealogical evidence to document it; and

WHEREAS, dramatic evidence of a resurgent American Indian presence in this State is the formation of the Cherokee Wolf Clan, based in Yuma in southeastern Carroll County; the Wolf Clan, comprised of Cherokees, Shawnees, Apaches, Blackfoot, and various other tribes, is governed by a formal constitution, with a Principal Chief, a Cabinet, a Tribal Council, and a Tribal Court; and

WHEREAS, the Wolf Clan publishes three newsletters to keep its membership in touch, including the *Wolf Clan Howls* for adult members, the *Wolf Cub News* for junior members, and *The Chief Speaks*, pertaining to tribal law and spirituality, as well as cultural history; the Wolf Clan hopes to unite all Native Americans in Tennessee and has long range plans for a Native American Museum, a library, a school, a tribal office, a playground, and a location for its Powwow; and

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Wolf Clan is ably lead by Principal Chief, Joseph Manycoats and Council Members Alma "Little Crow" Messina, Peggy "Blue Moon" Walters, Georgie "Summer Rain" Poland, Betty "Morning Sky" Dreaden, Ann "Snow Dove" Shields, Ralph "Coyote Brother" Lane, Clark "Running Wolf" Rochelle, Ruvina "Raven" Garrison, Michael "Rain in the Face" Border, Janie "Spirit Wolf" Walters, Terri "Purple Sky" Ward, Sarah "Night Shade" Walters and Kippy "Many Eagles" Vaughn; and

WHEREAS, a wholehearted recognition of the role of the original peoples of this State and region is long overdue; and our official approval of the admirable goals of the Cherokee Wolf Clan is appropriate at this time; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this General Assembly go on record as endorsing the approval of the Cherokee Wolf Clan as recognized Native American Indians in the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

